

BT/CT/RAD

Meeting Minutes

10/19/2010

Present: Betsy Szymczak – FERN, Scott Hennigan – Molecular Diagnostics, Glenn Krumholz, Lynda Glenn – Epi, Julie Nassif – CT (Facilitator), Jennifer Jenner – CT, Pete Kane – CT, Paul Servizio – CT, Deb Carter – BTRL (Recorder), Tanya Swanson - BTRL, Sue Koszalka - MERL

Next meeting: Tuesday, 11/02/2010 10:00, Room 133

I. Announcements

LRN National Meeting:

CT perspective: High sample volume full scale exercises- Lessons Learned Discussed that over time there is a decrease in response time for sample turnover, there has been a higher increase in precision and accuracy in results, most likely due to the use of the automated 96 well platform extraction and sample delivery in the level one labs.

Bob Kobelski gave high praise to Mass for their response to the mustard gas incident – a model for other states incident response!

New methods are being developed for transfer to the LRN-C labs (nerve agent adducts in serum and cyanide metabolite in urine).

Performance based proficiency testing for LRN-C labs was discussed and clarified.

BT perspective: BRAT lab is working on the next generation of rapid response testing, especially in molecular diagnostics

Bio-Assays in the field are not as reliable as manufacturers indicate and this information should be given to first responders, as this may lead to erroneous decisions on their part.

Partnerships with Law Enforcement and First Responders was discussed by several speakers, and led to some ideas for restore and reinvigorate working relationships with these agencies.

The DOD Response network will be instituted in the near future. DOD hospitals may provide surge capacity services during a mass casualty incident.

Cheryl's Poster: "Burkholderia pseudomallei – A Tropical Twist" won 1st Place in the Poster competition – Yea!!

Computer Technology: Massachusetts, Virginia and Idaho presented LRN LIMS Integration pilot results that were very well received by the CDC.

II. Updates

Bioterrorism Response Laboratory:

Work on IML to fix glitches continues

Tanya discussed the need for better communication and cooperation among various agencies: CST/State Police/FBI/Postal Officials, as there were major problems with the onsite collection and disposition of a sample associated with a threat letter this past week.

Sample was split (after Tanya instructed them not to do so)

One part of the sample was totally consumed (after Tanya requested that some be preserved)

DOC was informed that the scene had been cleared (it had not been cleared)

State Police insisted that the letter had not been sent through the mail (Pictures showed clearly that it had)

Chemical Threat Response Laboratory

Possible cigarette tampering in Milford to be investigated as soon the packet arrives

Epidemiology

Nothing to report

FERN

Northeast will be planning a drill in the Spring

Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks held a table talk exercise, in which the scenario given was set in Vermont. There were 10,000 dead, 40,000 sickened by yogurt. The LRNC was activated, but FERN was not invited to this exercise dealing with Foodborne disease.

MERL

Massachusetts Environmental Radiation Laboratory

Please go to this link:

<http://www1.whdh.com/news/articles/local/12002467175725/elevated-tritium-levels-found-at-plymouth-plant/>

Elevated tritium levels found at Plymouth plant – a press release

There are 18 monitoring wells, 2 showing in increased level, but no threat

The new liquid scintillation counters is on line

A drill with Pilgrim will be held on 10/20 and a larger one is planned for November.

Molecular Diagnosis and Virology

Arbor virus season is finished and cleaning (removing all nucleic acids) is being done.